

Writing Instruction

Examples

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Example #1 Rubric for Descriptive Paragraph

No
Not Evident
0

1

2

3

Yes
Very evident
4

Fix-up Zone

Descriptive Paragraph

Critical Attribute	You	Teacher
(Organization)		
1. The first sentence tells what is being described.	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
2. All the other sentences tell more about what is being described	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
3. The length is adequate.	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
(Sentences)		
4. Complete sentences are used.	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
5. The sentences begin with different words.	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
6. The sentences vary in length.	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
(Word choice)		
7. Descriptive words are used.	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
8. Overused words (e.g., nice, big, little) have been replaced with more precise or interesting words.	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
(Content)		
9. The description paints a clear and accurate picture of what is being described.	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
10. The description is easy for the reader to understand.	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4

It was dusk when we entered the tiny grocery store on the edge of the deserted road. The store was lit by a single bulb hanging near the entrance. The aisles in the store were narrow allowing only one shopper at a time. Ancient wooden shelves lining the aisles were cluttered with dust-covered cans and boxes. Yellowed labels on the cans held the secret of the store.

Example #1 Rubric for a Summary

Article to be Summarized

Just Say No to School Uniforms

Theresa J. Jenkins

People like to look nice, it's that simple. Sure, some people may spend more time on their appearance than others, but everybody puts at least a little thought into what they wear. It's important for kids to learn how to select their own outfits so that they will be able to participate comfortably in society as an adult. Requiring school uniforms takes away that opportunity. Uniforms blur an individual's sense of self, make kids self-conscious when the uniforms don't fit correctly, and cost the same if not more than normal clothes.

Childhood is an important time in a person's life. It is when they begin to form their personal identity. The clothes a person wears, especially as a teenager, reflects who they are and what they think. By forcing all students to wear the same thing, the school is not only denying them the freedom of dress, but the right to be truly themselves. If students aren't breaking the school dress code, there shouldn't be a problem with students wearing regular clothes that express their unique beings.

Uniforms won't fit everyone the same way. Human bodies, especially the developing teenage body, are hardly the same size or shape. Most people don't easily fit into the simple categories of small, medium, and large. Will the uniform skirt be long enough for the tall girl who has a hard time finding the right fit? Will the waistline and belt match the skinny boy? If anything, uniforms are going to make students feel overly conscious about their size, shape, and weight.

Some parents believe that school uniforms they will save them money on their children's wardrobes. However, this may not be true. Wearing uniforms all week is going to make kids even more anxious to have their own clothes to wear after school and on weekends. Students will get tired of always wearing the same navy and khaki and want new outfits to spice up their closets. In addition, parents will have to buy more than one outfit for each child and replacements since the clothes will eventually get worn. In the end, the clothing bill is unlikely to be reduced.

In conclusion, requiring school uniforms robs students of their unique identity and forces them into a "one size fits all" mold while costing parents additional money and failing to prepare students for the real world. Schools should just say no to school uniforms.

Example 1: Rubric – Informational Summary

Content of Summary	Student Rating	Teacher Rating
1. Topic - Is the topic of the original article stated?	Yes No	Yes No
2. Main Idea - Is the main idea of the article (or author's position) clearly stated?	Yes No	Yes No
3. Major Points - Does the summary focus on the major points, reasons, and/ or information from the article?	Yes No	Yes No
4. Accurate - Are the major points and information accurate?	Yes No	Yes No
5. Own Words - Is the summary written in your own words?	Yes No	Yes No
6. Concise - Is the summary shorter than the original article?	Yes No	Yes No
7. Combined Ideas - Are some of the ideas combined into longer, more sophisticated sentences?	Yes No	Yes No
8. Understanding - Is the summary easy to understand?	Yes No	Yes No

Conventions	Student Rating	Teacher Rating
1. Handwriting - Is the handwriting legible?	Yes No	Yes No
2. Spelling - Are the words spelled correctly, particularly the words found in the article?	Yes No	Yes No
3. Capitalization - Is correct capitalization used including capitalization of the first word in the sentence and proper names of people, places, and things?	Yes No	Yes No
4. Punctuation - Is correct punctuation used including a period at the end of each telling sentence?	Yes No	Yes No

Example 1: Rubric – Summary for Argument Article

Content of Summary	Student Rating	Teacher Rating
1. Topic - Is the topic of the original article stated?	Yes No	Yes No
2. Claim - Is the main claim of the article clearly stated?	Yes No	Yes No
3. Major Reasons - Does the summary focus on the major reasons, and information from the article?	Yes No	Yes No
4. Accurate - Are the claim, reasons, and information accurate?	Yes No	Yes No
5. Own Words - Is the summary written in your own words?	Yes No	Yes No
6. Concise - Is the summary shorter than the original article?	Yes No	Yes No
7. Combined Ideas - Are some of the ideas combined into longer, more sophisticated sentences?	Yes No	Yes No
8. Understanding - Is the summary easy to understand?	Yes No	Yes No

Conventions	Student Rating	Teacher Rating
1. Handwriting - Is the handwriting legible?	Yes No	Yes No
2. Spelling - Are the words spelled correctly, particularly the words found in the article?	Yes No	Yes No
3. Capitalization - Is correct capitalization used including capitalization of the first word in the sentence and proper names of people, places, and things?	Yes No	Yes No
4. Punctuation - Is correct punctuation used including a period at the end of each telling sentence?	Yes No	Yes No

Summary Example *(All attributes illustrated in summary.)*

In this article, Theresa Jenkins expresses her contention that schools should not require students to wear uniforms. She believes that requiring uniforms could have many negative outcomes including: 1) robbing children of their individuality, 2) requiring students to wear clothing that is not matched to their body types, and 3) increasing the wardrobe budget for families to cover the cost of regular clothing and uniforms.

Summary Non-Example *(Includes opinions other than those of the article's author.)*

The author of this article believes that schools should not require school uniforms for a number of reasons. First, wearing school uniforms takes away a children's chance to express their personality through their choice of clothing. I think this is particularly important when you are in middle school and you are trying to make a statement about yourself through the t-shirts, jeans, and jackets that you select. Second, students won't have a chance to practice picking out their own outfits, something that they would have to do everyday before they go to work.

Summary Non-Example *(Is not written in the student's own words.)*

Requiring school uniforms takes away the opportunity for students to learn how to select their own outfits. Uniforms blur an individual's sense of self, make students self-conscious when the uniforms don't fit correctly, and cost the same if not more than normal clothes. Schools should just say no to uniforms.

Example #2 Writing Frame for Emerging Writers

My favorite city is _____. This city is located in the state of _____. I like this city because _____

_____. One of my favorite things to do in this city is _____.

Another activity that I enjoy in _____ is _____

_____.

Example #3 Writing Frame to Accommodate Emerging Writers – State Report

_____ (State)

_____ is a very fascinating state. It is found in the _____ part of the United States. It is bordered by the following states: _____, _____, _____, and _____.

_____ has a variety of land and water forms. In terms of landforms, this state has _____, _____, _____, and _____.

The most dominant landform is its _____.

The largest lake in _____ is _____.

_____ also has a number of rivers including _____, _____, and _____.

_____ has a diverse economic base. One aspect of its economy is agriculture. Some of the crops grown in _____ include _____, _____, and _____.

Its most important crop is _____.

Another aspect of this state's economy is manufacturing. The following products are produced in _____:

_____, _____,
and _____ is the
product most often associated with this state. If you visited this state and
purchased either an agricultural or manufacturing product, you would
probably buy _____.

There are many recreational opportunities in _____.
First, there are a number of large state and federal parks. My favorite
park is _____. This park would be a great
place to visit because _____

_____.
These are some of the recreational activities you might enjoy in

_____: _____,
_____, and _____.

Of these, I would particularly enjoy _____.

One thing that this state is noted for is _____
_____.

This is noteworthy because _____
_____.

However, I thought the most interesting thing about this
state was _____.

Example #4 Writing frame for a story-problem explanation in math

In this problem, we were asked to figure out _____.
_____. Some important information was provided including _____
_____ and _____.
When creating a plan to solve this problem, I decided to follow a number of steps. First, I _____.
_____.
Next, I _____.
_____.
Then, I _____.
_____.
Finally, I _____.
After following these steps, I determined that the answer to this problem was _____.
To verify the accuracy of my answer, I asked myself if the answer was reasonable. After determining that the answer was reasonable, I also verified the answer's validity by _____.
_____.
Based on the verification of the answer, I am quite certain that it is accurate.

Example # 5 – Summarization - Narrative

_____ took place in/at
_____.

The main character of this story was _____.

His/her major problem was _____
_____.

_____ tried to solve this problem by _____
_____.

In the end _____

_____.

Example 5 continued – Summarization - Narrative

_____ title _____ was a narrative
selection about _____ theme _____. In
this story, _____ name _____, a/an _____
_____, was the main
character. Other critical characters included: _____ name _____,
_____,
and _____ name _____, _____.
In this story, _____ name _____'s major
problem/conflict/goal was _____
_____.
First, _____ name _____ tried to resolve this
problem/conflict/goal by _____
_____.
In the end, the following happened: _____
_____.

Example # 6 – Summarization – Informational Text

Viruses

Viruses have some characteristics of _____ things and _____ things. In some cases, viruses are _____, but they can live and _____.

To live and reproduce, viruses must invade a _____ and use it. Viruses are NOT _____ but have genetic _____. Different viruses need different _____. The _____ coat helps the virus detect the right kind of host cell. In _____, the virus attaches to the outside of a host cell. In _____, the virus injects genetic information into the host cell. During _____ and _____, the host cell's enzymes obey the virus's genetic instructions. During _____ new virus particles leave the _____ in search of new host cells.

Example #6 – Summary Informational Text

Summary of Informational Text – Frame

Chapter: _____ **Topic:** _____

- In this section of the chapter, a number of critical points were made about ...
- First, the authors pointed out that...
- This was important because...
- Next, the authors mentioned that...
- Furthermore, they indicated...
- This was critical because...
- Finally, the authors suggested that...

Chapter: *Drifting Continents*

Topic: *Wegener's Theory*

In this section of the chapter, a number of critical points were made about *Alfred Wegener's theory of continental drift*. First, the authors pointed out that *Wegener believed that all the continents were once joined together in a single land mass that drifted apart forming the continents of today*. This was important because *it explained why the outline of the continents as they are today fit together*. Next, the authors mentioned that *Wegener argued that there were many pieces of evidence supporting his theory of continental drift*. Furthermore, they indicated that *Wegener used evidence of similar landforms and fossils on different continents to prove his theory*. This was critical because *this evidence could be validated by other scientists*. Finally, the authors suggested that *despite this evidence, other scientists did not accept Wegener's theory because he could not explain the force that pushes and pulls the continents*.

Example 7. Reading Comprehension and Academic Language

Compare and Contrast Frame

Same

_____ and _____ are similar in a number of ways.

First, they both.....

Another critical similarity is

An equally important similarity is

Finally, they

Different

The differences between _____ and _____ are also obvious.

The most important difference is

In addition, they are

In the final analysis, _____ differs from _____ in two other major ways:

Example 7 Compare and Contrast Example

Narrative and informative written products are similar in a number of ways. First, they both *have an author intent on sharing his/her ideas*. Another critical similarity is *the goal of informative and narrative writing: to communicate to a reader or group of readers*. An equally important similarity is *that both genres utilize the words, mechanics, and grammar of the author's language*. Finally, *both are read on a daily basis across the world*.

The differences between *narrative* and *informative written products* are also obvious. The most important difference is *their purpose*. *Narratives convey a story, real or imagined, while informative products transmit information that the reader needs or is interested in learning*. In addition, they are structured differently. *The structure of a narrative is based on the elements of a story: settings, characters, the character's problem, attempts at resolving the problem, and finally its resolution*. In contrast, *when writing an informative product, authors organize the information into paragraphs each containing a topic and critical details*. In the final analysis, *narratives differ from informative text in two major ways: content and structure*.

Writing Frames for Specific Questions

Question

Why were Adams and Clay accused of making a “corrupt bargain” (stealing the election)?

Frame

Adams and Clay were accused of making a “corrupt bargain” for a number of reasons.

First, ...

In addition, ...

Finally, ...

Question

Summarize the ways that Jackson tried to get the support of people in the election of 1828.

Frame

Jackson used a number of techniques to gain the support of voters.

First,

Next,

In addition,

Lastly,

Writing Frames for Comprehension

Explanation

There are a number of reasons why...

The most important reason is...

Another reason is ...

A further reason is ...

So you can see why...

Explanation

There are differing explanations as to why...

One explanation for this is...

The evidence for this is ...

An alternative explanation is ...

The explanation is based on...

Of the alternative explanations, I think the most likely is...

Opinion

There is a lot of discussion about whether...

The people who agree with this idea claim that...

A further point they make is ...

However, there are also strong arguments against this point of view.

People with the opposing view believe that...

They say that...

Furthermore, they claim that...

After examining the different points of view and the evidence for them, I think... because...

Opinion

Though not everybody would agree, I want to argue that...

I have several reasons for arguing this point of view.

My first reason is ...

A further reason is...

Furthermore...

Therefore, although some people might argue that ...

I have shown that ...

Example #8 (Using strategy to write a paragraph summary. This is taken from *REWARDS PLUS*)

Step 1. LIST	(List the details that are important enough to include in your summary.)
Step 2. CROSS-OUT	(Reread the details. Cross out any that you decide not to include.)
Step 3. CONNECT	(Connect any details that could go into one sentence.)
Step 4. NUMBER	(Number the details in a logical order.)
Step 5. WRITE	(Write the paragraph.)
Step 6. EDIT	(Revise and proofread your answer.)

Example # 8 continued

Greek Theater

- 1 - began as a religious ceremony
- honored the Greek god Dionysus
- ~~- beliefs in Dionysus began to spread southward~~
- 2 - ~~choruses~~ chanted lyrics
- 3 - actors joined the choruses
- 4 - the Dionysus festival in Athens became a drama competition
- amphitheaters were built
- 5 - performed tragedies that taught lessons
- performed comedies that made fun of life
- 6 -declined when playwrights died and the government changed

Example #8 continued

The roots of modern theater can be found in early Greek theater. Greek theater began as a religious ceremony that honored the Greek god Dionysus. At first, choruses chanted lyrics. When actors were added to interact with the chorus, theater was born. Later, the Dionysus festival in Athens became a drama competition, and amphitheaters were built to accommodate the event. Both tragedies, which taught lessons, and comedies, which made fun of life, were performed. Greek theater declined when the great playwrights died and the government changed.

Example #9

Compare/Contrast Think Sheet

Subject: _____

SAME

Groups

Categories	St. Bernard	Newfoundland
Use	Rescue	Rescue
Height	Full grown males same	Full grown males same
Type of Fur	Smooth dense that protects from cold	Smooth dense that protects from cold

DIFFERENT

Groups

Categories		
Weight	155 – 170 pounds	140 – 150 pounds
Place of Origin	Swiss Alps	Newfoundland
Different Clients	Climbers and skiers	People in Atlantic Ocean

Example #9continued

The Saint Bernard and the Newfoundland are the same in several ways. Both dogs are large rescue dogs. The full grown males are about the same height. Both dogs have smooth dense fur that protects them from the cold while they are rescuing people.

Although the two dogs are similar, they also have differences. The Saint Bernard is much heavier, weighing 155 to 170 pounds. The lighter Newfoundland weights 140 to 150 pounds. The dogs originated in different places, so the types of rescues they perform are different. The Saint Bernard originated in the Swiss Alps and rescues climbers and skiers from the snow. The Newfoundland rescues people form the Atlantic Ocean. Both dogs perform important services for mankind.

Reference

Stephanie Gray and Catharine Keech. *Writing from Given Information: Classroom Research Study No. 3*. 1980. Bay Area Writing Project. Berkeley, CA: University of California.

Compare/Contrast Think Sheet

Subject: _____

SAME

Groups

Categories		

DIFFERENT

Groups

Categories		

Compare and Contrast

Item # 1 Senate

Item # 2 House of Representatives

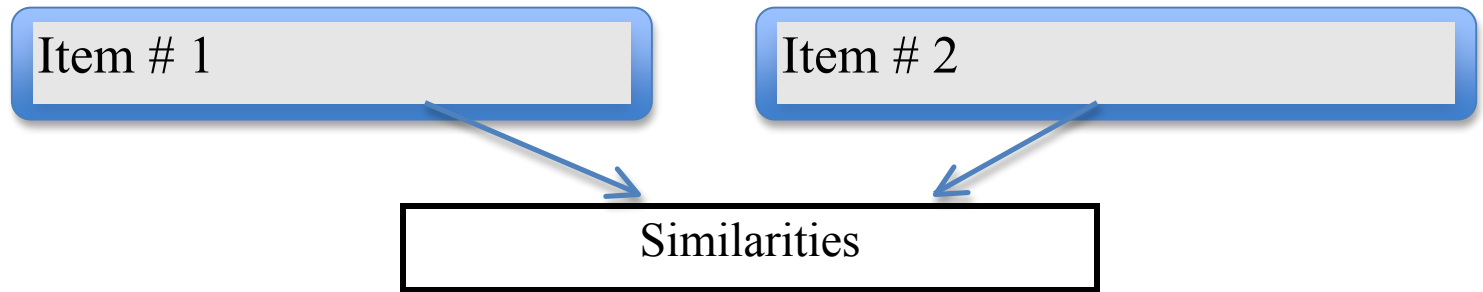
Similarities

- Both are part of the legislative branch of government
- Two parts of the Congress
- Members of Congress are elected by citizens of states
- Joint powers - make laws, declare war, collect taxes
-

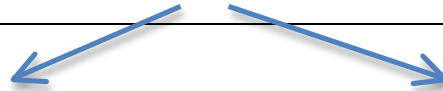
Differences

	Senate	House of Representatives
Number	• 100 Senators	• 435 Representatives
Number from each state	• 2 per state	• Determined by population
Qualifications	• At least 30 years old	• At least 25 years old
	• US citizen for 9 years	• US citizen for 7 years
	• Resident of state	• Resident of state
Different Powers	• Ratify treaties	• Starts spending bills
	• Confirm presidential	• Impeaches high officials
	• Tries impeached officials	• If electoral college has tie, elects president

Compare and Contrast



•
•
•
•
•
•



Differences

Opinion/Argument Rubric
Example #10

	Item #1	Item #2
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•

Purpose - To Convince

Author _____ **Essay Topic** _____

Question	Student or Partner Rating	Teacher Rating
INTRODUCTION 1. Does the introduction grab the reader's attention ? 2. Does the introduction tell the topic of the essay? 3. Does the introduction state the author's position on the topic? 4. Does the introduction preview the reasons for the position?	Yes No Yes No Yes No Yes No	Yes No Yes No Yes No Yes No
BODY 5. Does the body include at least three major reasons that support the author's position? 6. Does the author elaborate on and explain each of the major reasons using logical arguments, evidence, and examples? 7. Did the author acknowledge and respond to the opposing side's view ? 8. Are the paragraphs well-organized and easy to understand ? 9. Are transition words and phrases used to connect ideas within and between paragraphs?	Yes No Yes No Yes No Yes No Yes No	Yes No Yes No Yes No Yes No Yes No
CONCLUSION 10. Does the conclusion summarize the author's position ? 11. Does the essay have a definite conclusion that wraps up the essay?	Yes No Yes No	Yes No Yes No
CONVENTIONS 11. Did the author correctly spell words? 12. Did the author use correct capitalization ? 13. Did the author use correct punctuation ?	Yes No Yes No Yes No	Yes No Yes No Yes No
CONTENT 14. Did the essay hold the reader's attention from beginning to end? 15. Is the essay clear and easy to understand ? 16. Did the author stay focused on the same position throughout the paper?	Yes No Yes No Yes No	Yes No Yes No Yes No

Prompt: *In order to fight the rise of violence and use of drugs in schools, some faculties have implemented random searches of backpacks, book bags, lockers, and/or desks for weapons and*

drugs. Do you agree with these random searches or do you disagree? Write a letter to the faculty members at a school stating your opinion and justification for that opinion. Begin the letter with these words: Dear Faculty Members.

Dear Faculty Members,

How would you like a stranger to forge through YOUR purse, your computer bag, or your bedroom drawers? Would you not feel violated? That is exactly how I feel when teachers and administrators search my backpack and locker with NO notification. While I understand the danger of illegal drugs and weapons on campus, I am more afraid of the consequences that these searches will cause. I know these policies only come from a real concern for the safety and quality of our school campus, but I think that they will cause more problems than solutions. Random searches threaten personal privacy and erode a student's trust in the faculty without solving the heart of the issue.

Random searches through a student's book bag, locker, or desk are a clear invasion of personal privacy. Our desks, book bags, and lockers are essentially our home away from home. Thus, they contain very personal items that are part of our non-academic life such as diaries, notes from boy or girl friends, pictures from non-school events, cosmetics, and dental retainers. We had no intent that anyone would ever see or touch these items, but now a teacher or security guard is holding it up for all to see. Do you realize how embarrassing this would be to a shy, sensitive student?

Not only do these searches overstep boundaries of a person's private space, they break down valuable trust between students and teachers, the heart of that relationship. In order for a student to learn, they need to be comfortable with their teachers. If students are always worried about whether or not their teachers will look through their book bags or lockers, they will be too anxious to learn. School faculty will become intimidating figures that students don't trust. Education is supposed to help students grow up, not bring them down and make them feel vulnerable. Random searches would dramatically change the environment of a school from academic to suspicious.

Finally, searches will not solve the problem on a permanent basis. There's no doubt that widespread random searches will uncover some

illegal weapons or drugs in the beginning, but that doesn't mean that it is actually effective in the long run. Rather it will force offending students to be sneakier. Making more rules doesn't get to the root of the problem, but makes problems become more concealed. If students have drugs, they will just find different places to hide them. Even though these search efforts are well intentioned, they do little to solve the problem of illegal drugs and weapons in the school and may actually punish the innocent. For example, what if a nail file is found in a girl's locker and the security guards consider it a weapon? Would her future be jeopardized over a little manicure tool? What if a boy has Tylenol in his backpack because of a sprained ankle? These searches could punish the innocent while the guilty think of new and sneakier ways to hide their contraband.

Instead of random backpack searches, maybe schools could offer alternate solutions like counseling or advertising for anonymous help-lines. If students are using drugs or feel the need for weapons, they obviously need real help. Schools should point troubled kids to safe solutions instead of quick punishment. This way the students that aren't doing anything wrong won't be treated like criminals and schools can keep their focus on academics and education.

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Think Sheet - Argument/Opinion
To convince

Topic: <i>random searches</i>	Task: ✓ letter ___ essay ___ other
Audience: <i>faculty members</i>	Type of preparation: ✓ think OR ___ collect evidence
Purpose: Persuade ___ Pro ✓ Con	Brainstorm and select convincing reasons

Introduction		
GRAB Claim: <i>Random searches of desks, lockers, and backpacks should be banned from school properties for a number of reasons.</i>		
Reason A. <i>Invades personal privacy</i>	Reason B. <i>Destroys trust between students and faculty</i>	Reason C. <i>Doesn't solve problem</i>
Body A. Explain	Body B. Explain	Body C. Explain
1- <i>desks, book bags,</i>	1- <i>not comfortable with teachers</i>	1- <i>bad students sneakier</i>
<i>lockers are students' "home"</i>		
	3- <i>faculty intimidating</i>	2- <i>hide drugs in new places</i>
- <i>contain personal items</i>		
- <i>diaries</i>	2 - <i>students worried about searches</i>	3 - <i>may punish innocent</i>
- <i>notes</i>		
2- <i>pictures</i>		4 - <i>example - nail file</i>
- <i>retainers</i>	4 - <i>feel vulnerable</i>	
		5 - <i>example - Tylenol</i>
	5 - <i>changes school environment</i>	
- <i>don't want people to see</i>		
3- <i>don't want people to touch</i>		
4 - <i>embarrassing</i>		
Conclusion Wrap it up		

Think Sheet - Argument/Opinion To convince

Topic: _____ Audience: _____ Purpose: Persuade __Pro __Con	Task: __ letter __ essay __ other Type of preparation: __ think OR __ collect evidence Brainstorm and select convincing reasons.
--	---

Introduction

Grab Readers' Attention

Claim : _____

Reason A.

Reason B.

Reason C.

Body A. Explain

Body B. Explain

Body C. Explain

Conclusion Wrap it Up

Example #11**Think Sheet - Informative**
To inform or explain

Topic: _____	Task: __ letter __ essay __ other
Audience: _____	Type of preparation: __ think OR __ collect evidence
Purpose: Inform/Explain	Brainstorm and select three or more major points

Introduction**Topic:** _____**Main Idea:** _____**Point A.****Point B.****Point C.**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Body A. Supporting Details**Body B. Supporting Details****Body C. Supporting Details**

Conclusion
Wrap it Up

Thanksgiving – A Day of Gratitude

(Introduction)

My favorite holiday is Thanksgiving for a number of reasons. First, Thanksgiving gives me an opportunity to visit and play with friends and family members. Of course, Thanksgiving is also a great day to enjoy a variety of wonderful foods. In addition, it is a chance to stop and express gratitude for the richness of our lives.

(Body)

First, Thanksgiving affords me the gift of gathering with friends and family members. Normally, I celebrate Thanksgiving on the Friday after the official holiday. Twenty-five to fifty people generally attend my Thanksgiving party. My guests include my sister and her family and an array of friends from across the country. We spend much of our time just visiting, but we also engage in numerous activities. For example, we entertain each other by telling a story, playing the piano or guitar, or singing a song. Guests who don't want to perform make up the attentive audience. As a group, we also sing traditional Thanksgiving songs and hymns. After eating, we play games, go on a group stroll through the neighborhood, and continue our conversations.

Thanksgiving is not only an excellent time to enjoy friends and family members, it is also a wonderful time to EAT. You should see the buffet table at our Thanksgiving party. Of course, we have all the traditional foods: turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, and gravy. In addition, we always have a variety of vegetables and a Pacific Northwest specialty, salmon. The guests usually bring the desserts including pies, cakes, and cookies. My

favorite Thanksgiving food may surprise you: bread covered with gravy. Late at night, once my guests have turned off their lights, I slip back to the kitchen for my private snack. I tear a piece of bread into small pieces, cover it with gravy, heat the mixture in the microwave, and sit down for the final feast.

But most importantly, I love Thanksgiving because I take time to reflect on my life and express gratitude for my abundance. Even as I prepare for Thanksgiving, I contemplate my many blessings. As I set the table, I remember many of my relatives: my mother who gave me the salt and pepper shakers, my grandmother who once cherished the pitcher with an autumn leaf design, my sister who brought me the blue serving dish for this party. As I prepare the food, I am reminded of all the gifts that I have in my life that others lack: joyful work, abundant food, the shelter of a house, and warm clothing. My final preparation activity, creating floral arrangements for each of the tables, always carries me into deep gratitude for the beauty of nature. And then my friends arrive and I experience the greatest blessings of my life.

(Conclusion)

As you can see Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday. But it should also be your favorite for Thanksgiving is the only holiday that will never disappoint you. On Christmas, you may not get the gift you hoped for. On Valentine's Day, you may not have a girl or boy friend. On the Fourth of July, the fireworks may be cancelled due to dry conditions. However, on Thanksgiving, you expected turkey and you got it!

Example # 12 - Short Story

Think Sheet – Story

(7) Title

(3) Setting

(1) Main Character(s)

(2) Problem

(4) Beginning

(5) Middle

(6) End

Example # 13 - Personal Narrative Think Sheet

Autobiographical Incident Think Sheet

(5)	Title
(1)	Incident
(3)	Setting
(4)	Events in order
(2)	Lesson learned

Autobiographical Incident Think Sheet

(5)	Title	<i>Give Heart</i>
(1)	Incident	<i>Fifth grade with Mrs. Finkle -- Heart pin</i>
(3)	Settings	<i>Mountain View Elementary School</i>
(4)	Events	
1.	<i>Arrive at Mountain View.</i>	
2.	<i>Difficulty adapting to new fifth grade class.</i>	
3.	<i>Decided to be silent.</i>	
4.	<i>Mrs. Finkle was kind and caring.</i>	
	<i>Talked to me.</i>	
	<i>Patted my back.</i>	
	<i>Smiled at me.</i>	
5.	<i>Class got better.</i>	
	<i>Made friends.</i>	
	<i>Participated in class.</i>	
6.	<i>Mrs. Finkle caught heart pin in hairnet.</i>	
7.	<i>Helped Mrs. Finkle remove pin.</i>	
8.	<i>She gave me the pin and told me to “give heart” as a teacher.</i>	
9.	<i>Today I wear on Valentine’s Day.</i>	
10.	<i>Wear hearts every day ... and try to “give heart”.</i>	
(2)	Lesson learned	
	<i>Give heart to all people. Show love and care.</i>	

Give Heart

Being a teacher was not even a consideration at the time, but Mrs. Finkle, my fifth grade teacher, taught me my first lesson about teaching. Even now, it is the lesson that I try to practice every day.

Mountain View was the second school of my fifth grade, the eighth school of my short school career. After so many moves, the prospect of making new friends, of learning about a new teacher, of once again learning the classroom routines, brought me to total silence. For an outgoing person, silence was a new experience. I just didn't want to try again.

However, Mrs. Finkle was not about to lose my mind or soul. I will never forget the little things she did each day to reach out to the silent one: talking with me as we lined up for music, patting my back as I worked on math problems, quietly praising my efforts, writing comments on my papers. Best of all, when I was reading or working, I would look up and there would be her smile...greeting me, making me feel safe.

Gradually, the scary life of fifth grade in a new school began to fade. I did make friends. I did begin to talk in class. I began to write long stories and to read them to my class. All of this occurred because of the love and care shared by Mrs. Finkle.

And one day, she shared a symbol of that love. It was right before recess and most of the kids were already

out the door. Mrs. Finkle and I were both at the cloakroom pulling on hats, gloves, and coats as protection against the February cold. As she put on her coat, Mrs. Finkle caught her hairnet on her red heart pin that always rested on her collar. After struggling for a moment, she beckoned, "Anita, would you help me." Soon I had separated the heart pin from her hairnet. However, instead of replacing the pin, she handed it to me and gently directed, "You take it. You will be a teacher someday. Remember to give heart...always."

Forty years later, I wear that heart each Valentine's Day. But everyday, I wear at least one heart and try to remember her message as I teach. "Give heart." Thanks, Mrs. Finkle.